

Friends of Oakdale Cemetery, Inc.

520 North 15th Street
Wilmington, NC 28401

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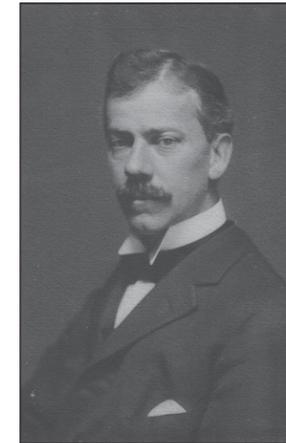
VOLUME 20, NO. 1

SPRING 2024

Henry Bacon

Written by Hunter Ingram

Henry Bacon's legacy may stand nearly 200 feet above the Reflecting Pool in the heart of Washington, D.C., but his story is laid to rest on a quiet hilltop in Oakdale Cemetery.



The renowned architect's life and name will always be defined by his most famous creation, the Lincoln Memorial, in the nation's capital. But his roots run deep in Wilmington, a place that formed his identity as a youth, embraced him repeatedly throughout his life, and ultimately gave him sanctuary in death.

One hundred years after his death on Feb. 16, 1924, Bacon



remains one of Wilmington's most celebrated sons — even if his story doesn't begin here. Born in Watseka, Illinois in 1866, his civil engineer father, also named Henry Bacon, moved his family to Wilmington in 1875 when the younger Henry was just eight years old. Almost all of Henry's formative schooling happened in Wilmington at Hemenway School and Tileston School, until he was sent to Boston at 16 and later the University of Illinois.

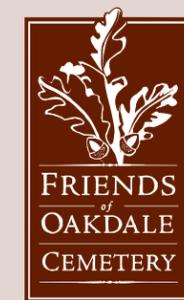
But the classroom couldn't contain his talent and creative mind. Henry left Illinois after a year to join an architectural firm in Boston as a draftsman before making the leap to the illustrious New York City firm of McKim, Mead & White, the latter of which had designed the original Madison Square Garden. Henry got his architectural mind honest. His father had moved to Wilmington, in part, to help the Federal government create what became known as The Rocks, a long jetty completed in 1881 that closed New Inlet near Fort Fisher to stop shoaling in the Cape Fear River and allow safer passage for larger vessels. *Continued on page 2.*

BE a Friend of Oakdale Cemetery!

Please mail your tax-deductible contribution to:

Friends of Oakdale Cemetery, Inc.
520 North Fifteenth Street ❖ Wilmington, NC 28401

Questions? Call us at 910-762-5682



Please check one:

- Founder** \$2,500 & up
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Membership is for one year ❖ Many volunteer opportunities!

Please contact me about volunteering!

A REMINDER

To all the Friends of Oakdale, when receiving this periodic publication, this is not a reminder of your membership status. The Membership Committee sends out a specific letter. These letters are mailed to you annually when the time arrives according to the month you had renewed last or joined.

Calendar of Events



Deadline for ordering Easter Lillies Wednesday, March 27, 2024

Easter is March 31, 2024. The Friends of Oakdale Cemetery are offering for sale a limited number of full, fresh Easter lillies for the graves of loved ones. See details on insert sheet of this newsletter.

Summer Walking Tour Series Saturday, May 18, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

Historical walking tours of North Carolina's oldest rural cemetery will be given by local historian Hunter Ingram who created Burgwin-Wright Presents and Cape Fear Unearthed Podcasts. Mr. Ingram will lead you on a journey through Oakdale and will delight you with many tales of those who are interred in the cemetery. Tour is from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Cost of the tour is \$10.00 per person.

Summer Walking Tour Series Saturday, June 15, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

Historical walking tours of North Carolina's oldest rural cemetery will be given by local historian, Robin Triplett. Ms. Triplett will lead you on a journey through Oakdale and will delight you with many tales of those interred in the cemetery. Learn some local history

ALL TOURS ARE CANCELED IN THE EVENT OF INCLEMENT WEATHER.

from a long time Wilmingtonian. Tour is from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Cost of the tour is \$10.00 per person.

Flashlight Tour

Saturday, September 21, 2024, 6:30 p.m.

Historical walking tours of North Carolina's oldest rural cemetery will be given by local historians, Dr. Chris Fonvielle, Robin Triplett and Hunter Ingram. Each of these historians will lead you through the cemetery and speak about the history of Oakdale, Civil War veterans, Funerary Art as well as a taste of Oakdale's prominent citizens. Tour is from 6:30 pm till 8:30 pm. Cost is \$20.00 per person and you must supply your own flashlight.

Fall Walking Tour Series

Saturday, October 19, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

Historical walking tours of North Carolina's oldest rural cemetery will be given by Superintendent, Eric Kozen. Mr. Kozen will lead you on a journey through Oakdale and will delight you with many tales of those interred in the cemetery. Learn some local history and interesting facts from the Superintendent who knows every square inch of Oakdale. Tour is from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Cost of the tour is \$10.00 per person.

Henry Bacon

Continued from front page

By the time the elder Henry was helping rescue the Wilmington region from its natural obstacles, the younger Henry was already well on his way to a career far from the Port City. After two years spent studying Roman and Greek architecture as a scholarship student in Europe, Henry would eventually return to the states just in time to contribute to projects like the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago.

He eventually left to start his own partnered firm and later went solo in 1903 for the rest of his career. From an office on Park Avenue, Henry carved out a resume of legendary works, even beyond his memorial to the 16th President. He had a hand in designing monuments to notable American figures like the Marquis de Lafayette (Easton, Pennsylvania), Alexander Hamilton (Washington, D.C.) and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (Cambridge, Massachusetts) — many of which were collaborations with long-time friend and sculptor David Chester French. The two men also designed and built the Dupont Circle Fountain in D.C. Among Henry's structural feats were the Danforth Memorial Library in Paterson, New Jersey; the Naugatuck, Connecticut train station; the hospital in Waterbury, Connecticut; the Court of the Four Seasons at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco in 1915; the World War I Memorial at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut; and the Confederate Memorial in Wilmington, North Carolina, which



he never saw completed before his death. The latter has since been removed.

But Bacon's greatest achievement was and will always be the Lincoln Memorial. His 99-foot-tall monument to the most consequential President in American history was a staggering feat of ingenuity and vision. The project took years to actually get off the ground — literally. Funding, conceptual designs and actual manpower were all factors in a statue that is unparalleled in its craftsmanship and cultural significance. Henry worked tirelessly on the memorial, which remains one of the most visited sites in the country.

Work officially began in 1912, but it wasn't completed until the early 1920s. Once the building was actually constructed, then the stoic and seated statue of Lincoln was pieced together, followed by nearly a year of road and walkway construction. More than a decade after Henry began working on the tribute to Honest Abe, it was officially dedicated on May 30, 1922. The following year, the one-year anniversary celebration doubled as one of the biggest moments of his career. In a ceremony at Lincoln's feet, he became only the sixth person in history to receive the gold medal from the American Institute of Architects, the organization's highest honor. It was presented to him by then President Warren G. Harding.

Less than a year later, Henry died on February 16, 1924 at the age of 57 following a battle with cancer. He worked up until the day he was hospitalized. Since his death, Bacon has been memorialized through tributes of all shapes and sizes, including the USS Henry Bacon, a Liberty warship built by the North Carolina Shipbuilding Company and launched into the Cape Fear River on November 11, 1942.

Bacon's body and legacy returned home to Wilmington after he passed to be interred in the family plot at Oakdale Cemetery. According to an article in The State Magazine (now Our State Magazine) from May 1969, his grave marker, which is one of the most popular spots in the cemetery, was designed by his brother Frank and modeled after a tropical flower that he was enchanted with from Egypt. A fittingly eye-catching memorial to a man whose own creations are still awe inspiring today.



www.oakdalecemetery.org

For those interested in Oakdale Cemetery, the website provides spectacular photography by Kenneth Newland. Featuring a fresh updated look and offers a more user friendly experience, improved navigation, and more interactive resources including maps, burial database, the ability to purchase items online, history, news, calendar of events, comprehensive cemetery information, newsletter archive and much more.



PLEASE FOLLOW US

Office Renovations



In late December, the Oakdale Cemetery Company began performing some much-needed renovations to the office building. The office is being expanded and a public restroom will be added and made available for the many tours that The Friends Group offers. It will be a few months until the renovations are completed and hopefully the office will re-open around April or May. There is a temporary office trailer that has been placed directly in front of the old office so that the staff can still assist families and visitors until they move back in.



Many thanks for your patience and understanding during this construction process and we look forward to inviting you to see the new renovations when they are complete. ❖



New Scatter Garden

A new Scatter Garden for cremations has been completed in the Live Oak Section and is currently available for the scattering of cremains. This beautiful garden is graced with a lovely marble statue from Italy. This location can now serve those who wish to be interred in Oakdale without the purchase of burial space. Names will be placed on the black panels that surround the garden. Please call the office for more information. ❖



Did You Know...

Did you know that the pillars that are located at the Live Oak Section off of 15th Street date back to the late 1800's and were originally at the other main entrance to Oakdale on the western side off of Miller Street aka Campbell



Street now. This other entrance opened around 1871 and remained until the mid-1950s when it was closed. It wasn't until the early 1990's when two of the larger pillars were retrieved from that old entrance and brought back up to 15th Street to adorn the entrance into the Live Oak Section. ❖



VOLUNTEERS WELCOMED!

If you would like to become more involved with the Friends of Oakdale Cemetery, Inc., we have lots of opportunities for you.

910-762-5682